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AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL INTERVIEW
Please type your answer into the blank box beneath each question; these boxes will expand as you type.
Your name Please respond with your name, styled as you would like it to appear in print
Professor Joyce Goodman
Biographical notes Please provide a short autobiographical statement (maximum of 150-250 words), outlining your association with the History of Education Society and/or career within the history of education research field.
<p>I joined the History of Education Society in 1995 when I was appointed to my first full-time academic post at the University of Winchester, three years after having been awarded a PhD at Manchester University on “Women Governors and the Management of Working Class Girls’ Education”. On joining the society I took on the role of ISCHE representative and so attended my first ISCHE conference at Cracow in 1996, which was a hugely influential moment in the development of my career and my thinking about Europe. I was subsequently elected to the ISCHE executive on a platform to enhance research student experience and took on the role of ISCHE secretary for a six year period. Jointly with Jane Martin I edited the <i>History of Education Researcher</i> and then <i>History of Education</i> and eventually became society president. Those various roles for the society and for ISCHE supported my applications at Winchester to become reader and then professor.</p>
What first ignited your interest in the history of education?
<p>A table in a school where I was teaching first ignited my interest in history of education. I wanted to move the table from its current position and was told that it used to be situated elsewhere and it had to be moved back to its previous place. As a mature part-time undergraduate student at the time I became fascinated by the role of tradition in the life of the school and as a result chose a historical theme around girls’ education for my undergraduate dissertation.</p>
Whose work has most influenced your own?
<p>I was influenced by the the work of Carol Dyhouse, June Purvis and Penny Summerfield, who were ground breaking historians of women’s education. My collaboration with Jane Martin was important in my developing approaches to women’s history. More recently Maria Tamboukou’s use of Alfred North Whitehead’s process philosophy in writing about both the archive and education history, and Lynn Fendler’s writing on post-foundational approaches have been influential in my work.</p>
Which books on history and/or the history of education have most influential you?

As an eclectic reader the books that influence me shift. At present I am interested in Elizabeth Grosz’s linkage of temporalities and feminist approaches to historical change which resonates with a raft of texts by historians on social change, as well as with texts by new materialists concerned with intra-actions of the human and non-human.

What other resources, including websites and other electronic resources, have you found valuable?

I regularly use the sources on the Women and Social Movements International website. Twitter keeps me up to date with recent blog posts. I regularly read the African American Intellectual History Society blog posts and Tamson Pietsch’s various blogs.

What is your general area of research?

The general area of my current research is around women and intellectual cooperation as it relates to internationalism, imperialism, peace, intellectual history, historiography and social change. In the history of women’s education more broadly I focus on international women’s organisations; secondary education for girls; religion, gender and education; and the arts and education.

How would you describe your methodological approach?

I interweave theoretical and historical approaches but I always start from the sources themselves because I believe that theory is only useful for historians if it provides insights into data. More recently I have become interested in how new materialist approaches interweave the human and non-human when thinking about objects, environment, context and configurations of agency.

With what kinds of historical source have you worked?

For my PhD I accessed documentary sources between 1790 and 1914 in local and national repositories. Post PhD I became fascinated by inter-war and Cold War era sources. More recently I have used a range of international repositories, drawing on personal papers, organisational records and state papers. I photograph in archives and upload the photos to a database that turns images into machine-readable text. Increasingly I use digitised sources, images (photographs and film), material culture (objects and the built environment) and sources for sensory histories (including the haptic and acoustic).

What was your greatest breakthrough moment in research?

Reading a range of minute books in the Chester Record office showed that early nineteenth century women managed a range of educational and welfare initiatives from birth to death for girls and women in the city. This focussed my mind on women’s exercise of authority and power, which has been a recurrent theme of my research.

What is the biggest challenge you have faced, and how did you overcome it?

Working to decentre a Western/European analysis is my greatest challenge. I try to overcome this challenge by using Japanese and Korean sources, alongside British and French colonial records.

What have been the most significant findings of your research career to date?
My most significant finding is the volume and depth of women’s engagement with education (broadly defined) and its political importance. This is missing from many historical accounts of education and also from much women’s and gender history as well as histories of internationalism and of comparative education.
What are you working on at the moment?
I have been rethinking my conceptualisation of history which I will incorporate into one or more books about education, gender, internationalism, transnationalism and imperialism.
What three pieces of advice would you give to somebody starting out as a historian of education today?
(i) Focus your research until you are known for the topic on which you work; (ii) branch out only after that; and (iii) read Antonio Novoa’s Letter to a Young Educational Historian in <i>Historia y Memoria de la Educación</i> 1 (2015): 23-58.
What approaches to teaching the history of education have you used effectively?
Using drafts of my writing as student readings along with the primary source data and the primary texts on which it was based gave students insights into the process of research and prompted me to write shorter and clearer sentences. I would now use blog posts for assignments.
How has the History of Education Society supported your research and/or teaching?
The opportunities to edit both the <i>History of Education Researcher</i> and <i>History of Education</i> were hugely important in broadening my research beyond the UK as did the encouragement to take up the role as ISCHE representative early on in my career.
What would you like to see the Society achieve over the next fifty years?
I would like the society (i) to be seen as the first port of call for historical insights into current issues by growing its public profile; and (ii) to extend the society’s support to both postgraduate and early career members and retain them as society members.
Which three people, living or dead, would you invite to your dream dinner party? Why?
I would invite three women composers: Ethel Smyth (1858-1944) to ask what music she conducted with the toothbrush she pushed between the bars of her Holloway prison cell when incarcerated for militant suffrage activities and how well she thought the piece was performed; Florence Price (1887-1957) to ask about being the first black woman in the USA to have her music performed by a major symphony orchestra; and the woman - who may have been composer Ruth Gipps (1921-99) - who taught me music history at the Royal College of Music. At a time when women conductors were unheard of she inspired me by discussing the music she had conducted. She made music history come alive in an interdisciplinary way when she discussed the ‘Russian Five’, Bruckner and Mahler, prompting my love of history and the importance I attribute to interdisciplinary.

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What question do you wish you had been asked?
I see all history of education as a form of political history, so my question would be about how overtly political historians of education should be in their writing and in what ways.